

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Dalco Metals, Inc.

#### Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Dalco Metals, Inc. Gets Leaner with 5S

##### Client Profile:

Dalco Metals, Inc., is a family-owned supplier of flat-rolled steel-processing services to manufacturers throughout the Midwest. Dalco Metals, located in Walworth, Wisconsin, employs 48 people.

##### Situation:

Dalco Metals realized that everything pointed toward adopting Lean manufacturing methods. "A customer recommended we look into Lean manufacturing, a classmate in my MBA program recommended 5S (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain), and I attended the Manufacturing. Matters! conference and participated in a Lean workshop presented by the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate," said John Ring, Executive Vice President of Dalco Metals. Soon after, the company embarked on their Lean journey, with the help of WMEP manufacturing specialist Jerry Thiltgen.

##### Solution:

WMEP suggested using the 5S process to clean and organize Dalco Metals' facility. "I thought our facility was clean and organized, so I wasn't convinced that it would make a big difference," said Ring. "Thiltgen explained that 5S is far more than just straightening up and cleaning. It involves reviewing and re-thinking each employee's activity, and making sure their work area supports their work." The 5S process relies on employees taking control of their work areas and suggesting and implementing improvements. "The results of this process were amazing," said Ring, "especially considering that the primary language of many of our employees is Spanish." Luis Lopez, a consultant working with WMEP, assisted in the facilitation of the 5S process, and his assistance greatly improved communication and empowered company employees to share their ideas. "Now employees know their voices are being heard," said Ring. "We've made changes to facilitate better communication, including signage in two languages, publishing the employee newsletter in English and Spanish, and providing additional training in two languages."

##### Results:

- \* Estimated \$50,000 in cost savings
- \* Invested \$100,000 in plant equipment.

##### Testimonial:

"5S has meant a night and day difference in our plant -- including great improvements in productivity, quality and safety. In the past, we had to shut down early to clean and prepare for a customer tour. Now, our facility is a great selling point for us. Customers can see that we have a well-organized, quality-focused, clean, and efficient operation."

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John Ring, Executive Vice President